

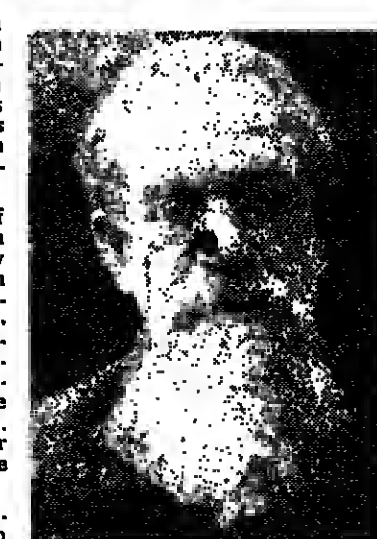




# Revolution without coercion

By Leonard Schapiro

other contributors argued from different angles around the central theme that the individual precedes society and that spiritual re-education precedes political reform. The volume was a trenchant attack on the intelligentsia—though that it was an attack was denied by the editor (M. Gershenzon)—and it produced a furor of protest from both the left and the right.



Struve in middle life, from Richard Pipes's biography.

Yekhi can be criticized in some respects—and Pipes does criticize it. But his main thesis was proved up to the hilt in 1917 when the intelligentsia failed in rally in support of law and order, and opened the way to the dark age of Bolshevism.

During the First World War Struve played an important part as chairman of the committee for limiting trade with the enemy. He visited England in 1916 where his growing reputation as an economist and writer gained him an honorary L.D. at Cambridge, returning in Russia in 1917—the year in which, on the eve of the February revolution, he successfully defended his doctoral dissertation at Kiev University, and, a few months later, was elected a member of the Academy of Sciences.

The revolution of March 1917 did not fill Struve with elation—in this he differed from virtually all other representatives of the "op-

position camp". His anxiety stemmed from the fear that without a lawful transfer of authority from the bureaucracy to representatives of "society" Russia would collapse, since the intelligentsia's utopian aspirations disguised as "class struggle" would unleash destructive anarchy. After the Bolshevik coup in November 1917 Struve identified himself as closely and energetically as he could with the political side of the White movement of military resistance to Bolshevism. He believed that by doing so he was fighting for the cause of liberty in Russia. His last service was with General Wrangel, whom he did much to promote as the head of the final Russian anti-Bolshevik government. With the defeat of Wrangel, Wrangel began (in 1920) Struve's long years of exile, which lasted until his death in 1944.

Life in exile was spent by Struve first in Paris, and then in Prague, where he became Professor of Political Economy at the Russian Juridical Faculty, which had been established in Prague University in order to train lawyers and civil servants for a future democratic Russia. After an unhappy period as editor of the monarchist periodical *Vostochny* (Renaissance), he settled in Belgrade in 1928, where he was to remain until 1942. The last years of his life were spent in German-occupied Paris. Throughout his years of exile he played a leading and energetic role in Russian émigré politics. He opposed with all his might both the facile optimism of the many—especially those who followed the Kador leader Milyukov—who claimed to see evolution in Soviet Russia towards a national bourgeois order, and the extremism of the monarchists. As he always been the case with the small band of Russian thinkers who have followed the middle road, Struve was abused as a roid reactionary by the left, and as a dangerous red by the right.

Struve's literary output extended over a vast range of subjects. His main efforts were devoted to economics and history, but literature and sociology and political analysis, among other subjects, feature in the 663 items listed by Professor Pipes in his bibliography (quite apart from hundreds of newspaper articles). Professor Pipes provides an extended analysis of Struve's economic writings, but leaves judg-

ment on their significance to some future economist. His historical writings display immense erudition and originality—it is much to be regretted that his major work, a comprehensive social and economic history of Russia, remained unfinished. He will probably be best remembered for his penetrating analysis of Russian politics in general and the Russian Revolution in particular, and for his tireless advocacy of liberty within the framework of legal order.

Struve described himself as a "liberal conservative"—a term first applied by Prince Viazemsky (Pushkin, whom Struve held in lifelong veneration. The list of Russian liberal conservatives is not long: apart from Struve, there were Vinzensky and Tushnet, the historian Karanin, Admiral Mordvinov, the novelist Turgenyev, the Zemstvo activist Dmitri Shipov, the jurists Boris Chicherin and A. P. Koni, Stanlyin, and a few others. They are all distinguished by their belief that freedom, which is the prime human desideratum, can only flourish on a foundation of legal order and private property; that it can be achieved only by gradual evolution and not by revolution; and that it must be based on the foundation of recognizing the value of one's national heritage. But in this context Struve completely rejected the idea as dear to the slavophiles and the populists (nihilism was for him "the syphilis of Russia") that the Russian should pursue some separate path from Western Europe—national Russia was for him pervasively Peter the Great and Pushkin.

Like so much of Struve's political writing, his analysis of the Russian Revolution has stood up particularly well. He rejected the denial of Russia's participation in the Russian and French revolutions, because the societies in which they took place were fundamentally different. The distinctive cause of the Russian Revolution was the traditional non-involvement (for which he squarely blamed the autocracy) in the political process of Russia's two principal population groups—the educated elite and the peasant masses. The educated minority were, as a result of the denial of political participation, imbued with the "psychology and traditions of political apostasy" while the peasants, being denied until too late any sense of private property, and consequently the appreciation

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